(a) whether the Government are aware, 15 wagon load of valuable timber booked for Kongkoria railway station in Gujarat from Bhairabi railway station in Mizoram reached Badarpur railway junction of Karimganj District Assam while in transit;

(b) whether the timber with an approximate value of Rs. 5 crores is being smuggled out from Hailakandi district of Assam; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check this menace ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The State Government of Gujarat reported that the said material was detained by the railway police at Kankaria as per the fax message received from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Assam. They have further intimated that on an enquiry conducted by a Forest Officer from Assam, the detained material was found to be procured legally.

(b) and (c) Information from Government of Assam is being collected and will be placed on the Table of House.

Stock Holding Limit

3574. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been invited to the news-item captioned "Bid to streamline PDS functioning," appearing in the 'Times of India', dated January 23, 1997;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry had earlier accused some State Governments of not enforcing the stock holding limit and other related laws to ensure fair distribution of wheat;

(c) the names of the said states and the details of laws not abided by them;

(d) the reasons therefor; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against these States ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No news-item with this caption has appeared in the Times of India dated 23rd January, 1997 (New Delhi edition).

(b) to (e) In December, 1996, the Central Government decided to reintroduce licensing and also to enforce stock-limits on wheat and wheat products with a view to contain the rising trend in the open market prices of wheat. Accordingly, all the State Governments/U.T. Administrations were advised to take necessary action in this regard. The State Governments of Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh & Orissa have brought wheat and its products under the purview of licensing and also enfored stock-limits on these Commodities. The State Governments of Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur & Chandigarh Administration have brought wheat under the purview of licensing. West Bengal has also imposed stock-limits on wheat. Other State Governments/ Union Territories are yet to respond.

[Translation]

Automobile Pollution

3575. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the Government are aware that leaded petrol is the main cause for the automobile pollution in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government have conducted or propose to conduct any enquiry regarding the pollution caused by the leaded Petrol in the country particularly in Gujarat;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Central Government to check the environmental pollution caused by the leaded petrol ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The main causes of vehicular pollution in the country are emissions from petrol and diesel vehicles.

(b) The Central Pollution Control Board have conducted two major surveys in 1987 and in 1994 covering 12 metropolitan cities in the country including Ahmedabad in Gujarat.

(c) The level of air pollution in Ahmedabad due to vehicular pollution has risen from 243.94 tonnes per day in 1987 to 292.94 tonnes per day in 1994.